

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT
for
NORTH FOREST INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT
ADMINISTRATION BUILDING
HOUSTON, TEXAS
FEMA-1379-DR-TX

BACKGROUND

In accordance with 44 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) for the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), Subpart B - Agency Implementing Procedures, Section 10.9, an environmental assessment (EA) was prepared pursuant to Section 102 of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969. The purpose of the EA was to analyze the potential environmental impacts associated with the proposed construction of a new, two-story administration building, construction of new parking lot, and renovation of the gymnasium and cafeteria areas into a book depository and general warehouse for the school district, and to determine whether to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) or a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI).

The participation of FEMA in the proposed action is dictated by the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act, PL 93-288, as amended, and implementing regulations at 44 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Part 206, Federal Disaster Assistance for Disasters Declared on or after November 23, 1988. These rules control the eligibility and funding for public assistance disaster relief. Any assistance FEMA can provide is determined and controlled by these regulations.

The proposed project is located in the northeast section of Harris County, approximately nine miles north-northeast of downtown Houston, within the city limits of Houston. The proposed location to build the new administration building is on the Northwood Middle School Campus. The middle school is located at the southeast corner of the intersection of Little York Road and Homestead Road.

The original administrative building for the NFISD was destroyed in the flooding that took place during the declared disaster event in June 2001. The flooding interrupted the administrative operations performed by the NFISD and displaced operations and administrative staff. The original administrative building was approximately 12,000 square feet in area and was declared a total loss. The purpose of the proposed action is to allow the NFISD to continue to provide effective administrative and operation services to the NFISD by providing a facility to replace the one lost in the flooding event. The proposal evaluated in the Environmental Assessment involves constructing the new administrative building and parking lot and remodeling the existing gymnasium and cafeteria. The project alternatives are 1) No Action and 2) Build New Administration Building. The No Action alternative would not build a new administrative building for the NFISD. Under this scenario, the NFISD would continue administrative operations for the NFISD from their current, temporary location or look for other suitable facilities.

A legal notice was posted in the local newspaper, *The Houston Chronicle*, on September 13, 2004 and the Draft Environmental Assessment was made available for public review at the Dixon Branch Public Library for a 30-day period. No public comments were received.

FINDINGS

FEMA has made the following determinations from the information contained in the EA:

The proposed project as described in the EA will not result in any significant adverse impacts to existing land use, water resources (surface water, groundwater, waters of the United States, wetlands, and floodplains), air quality, noise, biological resources (vegetation, fish and wildlife, state and Federally listed threatened or endangered species and critical habitats), safety, hazardous materials and waste, cultural resources, or result in disproportionately high or adverse effects on minority or low-income populations. The proposed action is also in compliance with all relevant Federal, state and local laws, including Executive Orders (EO) 11988 (Floodplain Management), EO 11990 (Protection of Wetlands), and EO 12898 (Environmental Justice).

CONDITIONS

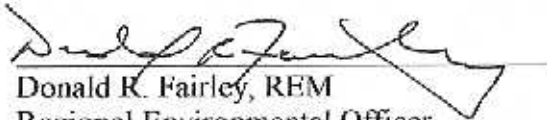
The following conditions must be met as part of this project. Failure to comply with these conditions may jeopardize Federal funds:

- 1) The EA and this FONSI apply only to the project area that has been specifically described and evaluated in the EA. Any other areas beyond the project area that may be impacted due to changes in the project plan must be evaluated for compliance with NEPA and other applicable Federal, State and local environmental and historic preservation laws, regulations, and Executive Orders.
- 2) Best management practices for sedimentation and erosion control will be utilized where appropriate during construction and for as long as deemed necessary.
- 3) Construction noise will be limited to workday, daylight hours to the greatest extent practicable.
- 4) If hazardous constituents are unexpectedly encountered in the project area during the proposed construction operations, appropriate measures for the proper assessment, remediation and management of the contamination will be initiated in accordance with applicable Federal, state, and local regulations. The contractor will take appropriate measures to prevent, minimize, and control the spill of hazardous materials in the construction staging area and project work area.
- 5) No historic or cultural remains are likely to be encountered during the construction activity; however, in accordance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act, should unanticipated historic or cultural materials be encountered during construction, all construction activities shall cease immediately until their cultural affiliation and ultimate disposition is determined in consultation between FEMA and the State Historic Preservation Officer.


CONCLUSIONS

Based on the findings of the EA, coordination with the appropriate agencies, comments from the public, and adherence to the project conditions set forth in this FONSI, FEMA has determined that the proposed project qualifies as a major Federal action that will not significantly affect the quality of the natural and human environment, nor does it have the potential for significant cumulative effects. As a result of this FONSI, an EIS will not be prepared (44 CFR Part 10.9) and the proposed project as described in the EA may proceed.

APPROVAL


Donald R. Fairley, REM
Regional Environmental Officer
FEMA Region VI

Date 28 Oct 2004


Ron Castleman
Regional Director
FEMA Region VI

Date 10-28-04